

Attention to the longstanding ties between top Iranian officials and al-Qa'ida leaders, including Osama bin Laden's top lieutenant, Ayman al-Zawahiri, has been eschewed by a pervasive fundamental attribution error: "Shiite Iran will not work with Sunni militants comprising the ranks of al-Qa'ida." This assessment fully ignores readily available evidence to the contrary. Indeed, such relationships span back to the early 1990s, when top officials from the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' clandestine Qods Force, working in concert with Iran's chief global terrorist proxy, Lebanese Hizballah, began training and equipping bin Laden's warriors. Then, following the 1996 attack on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 Americans, more evidence surfaced of operational linkages between al-Qa'ida and the Qods Force, an official Iranian paramilitary organization which possesses a mandate from Iran's Supreme Leader to fund, train, and equip Islamist terrorists. These very operational linkages are referenced within the 9/11 Commission Report, whose authors acknowledged the relationship between al-Qa'ida and Iran demonstrates that Sunni-Shiite divisions "did not necessarily pose an insurmountable barrier to cooperation in terrorist operations."

Since 9/11, these partnerships have become all the more pronounced. Hundreds of al-Qa'ida members, along with family members of Core al-Qa'ida leaders like Osama bin Laden, have found refuge inside Iran. Officials now know Iran's minister of defense, formerly a commander of the Qods Force, furnished safe houses for many of these terrorists. Officials also know that while under "house arrest" inside Iran al-Qa'ida's top military commanders like Saif al-Adl were able to coordinate attacks against Western targets. Examples of these attacks include the May 2003 bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia that killed eight Americans.

Since 2005, Iran has rapidly evolved from a theocracy into a garrison state. With help from the Islamic Republic's unelected officials, notably Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamene'i, and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (a former member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps), the IRGC has seized control of most critical sectors inside Iran. Having secured their future grips on power by elevating the domestic roles of the IRGC, Iran's leaders are now pursuing their lust for regional hegemonic status. Their strategy entails both a persistent quest for nuclear weapons—the acquisition of which Iran's leaders view as the means to ensure their recent regional gains will be irreversible—and support of terrorist organizations which are able to help Iran destabilize unfriendly states, and perhaps even Iran's entire neighborhood.

Today, the Middle East is more volatile than at any time since the Islamic Revolution's leaders seized control of Iran, and hardliners in Tehran are better positioned than ever before to influence the future of this critical region. Concurrently, with support from a state sponsor like Iran, al-Qa'ida will be better positioned than ever before to strike the West and our allies, and to foment chaos in both the Arab world and South Asia that would ultimately benefit Iran. As the implications of working partnerships between Iran and al-Qa'ida carry weighty implications for not just the security of the Middle East and South Asia, but also America's national security interests, it is incumbent upon policy makers in Washington to address this issue. For if left unchecked, Iran's relationship with al-Qa'ida could cost America and our allies dearly.

This report focuses on the history of Iran's relationship with al-Qa'ida, and briefly addresses potential implications of these ties.

Additionally, its author provides a list of recommended action items for Members of the United States Congress, as well as a list of questions that may help Members develop a better understanding of this issue through interactions with defense and intelligence officials.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 639

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 639, the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROKITA). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

STORING NUCLEAR WASTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, this marks the first of what I hope to be many times to address you and my colleagues on an issue that I have been graced with having the responsibility to deal in the public policy arena, and that's the issue of nuclear waste.

When people talk about nuclear waste and this debate about where it is and why it's there, they primarily talk about our nuclear utilities. Especially after Fukushima Daiichi, people understand that when you store high-level nuclear waste onsite and if there's a disaster that occurs and if the pools run dry, then you might have a melting which might spread radioactivity, and that's not good for anybody. That's a good debate to have because we have nuclear waste stored all over this country.

But I'm not here really to talk about the private for-profit sector, the nuclear industry today. I'm here to tell another story, another story that really talks about why we have government and why there's still a need for some government entities.

Back during World War II—and we just heard my colleague talk about the Honor Flights—back during World War II, we decided as a Nation to win these wars. One way to make sure that we wouldn't lose thousands upon thousands of soldiers in an invasion of Japan was to develop the nuclear bomb. Two were dropped; the war ended. Many people historically know that development, that occurred because of the Manhattan Project.

What I think a lot of people don't know is that we still are dealing with much of the history of winning the war in the Manhattan Project and that winning the Cold War relied upon a strong military and a strong nuclear deterrence. So even after World War II, we continued to develop nuclear weapons, which we deal with today.

So I had a chance to visit during our last district work period, I took a day and visited a place called Hanford, Washington. Hanford, Washington was part of the Manhattan Project. Hanford was the site that the U.S. military picked to help produce plutonium. The "Fat Man" bomb was developed there. That area was picked for a lot of reasons. There weren't a lot of people there. As you can see, the Columbia River is right next to it. You had some low-cost power production, and so it was a good site. And, hence, people got moved off the land, the government took over, and the government has been controlling hundreds of acres in Washington State even today.

The result of the Cold War and winning World War II is that millions of gallons of nuclear waste now reside in Hanford, Washington. And I'm not exaggerating. In fact, 53 million gallons of nuclear waste is onsite. And what's interesting about Hanford, of course, when you started storing this nuclear waste, our technology, our information, our knowledge was not as great as it is now. The way we stored this material then would not be an acceptable process today. It is an environmental disaster and a hazard that has to be cleaned up.

You have approximately 174 storage tanks. These storage tanks are from 750,000 gallons to a million gallons, all with nuclear waste in these tanks. These tanks are buried, as it says here, 10 feet underground and 250 feet above the water table, a mile from the Columbia River. Some of these tanks are leaking. It's just not a good thing for us to have. And so the government has been trying to deal with this one site of nuclear waste in this country.

Why do I bring this before you, Mr. Speaker, and why is this important? Because in 1982, part of the process of dealing with Hanford was to pass a law.

□ 1330

The law was called the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, and in that law it says, We've got a solution. We're going to collect all the high-level nuclear waste, and we have a storage facility that we're going to place it in. And that place is Yucca Mountain. Now, many of you may have heard about Yucca Mountain before. I've visited it twice. Yucca Mountain is in a desert, and it's a mountain. So I do the side-by-side comparisons here.

Right now at Hanford we have 53 million gallons of nuclear waste on site. Yucca Mountain, which is a site we designed, we picked. We studied for decades. We spent \$12.5 billion. We currently have no nuclear waste there.

The nuclear waste at Hanford is stored 10 feet underground. The nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain would be stored a thousand feet underground. The nuclear waste at Hanford is 250 feet above the groundwater. The nuclear waste at Yucca will be stored a thousand feet above the water table. The nuclear waste at Hanford is a mile

from the Columbia River. The closest river to Yucca Mountain is the Colorado River, which is 100 miles away.

I'll come back to this floor throughout the year and highlight different locations around the country where there's waste and start pleading with my colleagues to help us stop two people—the President of the United States and Majority Leader HARRY REID. Majority Leader REID has blocked our ability to continue to move forward and take nuclear waste from around this country and place it underneath a mountain in a desert.

This location is exhibit number 1. There is no more compelling location in this country that cries out for this waste to be moved than Hanford. In fact, in the clean-up process, the scientific design of the casks that will be used to clear out these 53 million gallons of waste and put into storage containers, they are designed specifically for Yucca Mountain. Again, we have spent \$12.5 billion to prepare this site to receive nuclear waste.

The House went on record this year on a vote in the appropriation bill for energy and water and said, yes, Yucca Mountain is still where we believe high-level nuclear waste ought to go. And that vote was 297 Members voting to increase funding to complete the safety review of the DOA application so that Yucca Mountain could move forward.

One Senator is blocking this, one Senator from the State of Nevada. But it's time for the other Senators from these other States who are affected, regardless of their party, to say, "I don't want this high-level nuclear waste in my State. We have a Federal law to move it to underneath a mountain in a desert." And it's time for them to stand up and be counted. That's why this is my first trip to the well identifying one location in this country, I think the most compelling argument for Yucca Mountain, and it's not even tied to that nuclear power generating for-profit industry. It is tied to our World War II legacy and the environment and the health of not only the land here in Washington State but also the great Columbia River.

So who are we asking to stand up and be counted and help us move this? Well, we just happen to have four U.S. Senators, two from the State of Washington, two from the State of Oregon: Senator CANTWELL; Senator MURRAY; Senator WYDEN; and Senator MERKLEY.

Now, if you look at this site, the Columbia River, those of you who know your geography know that the Columbia River, when it gets closer to the west side of the State, separates the State of Oregon and the State of Washington, to the north. North of the Columbia is Washington State, south is Oregon.

These Senators need to step up to the plate, and these Senators need to do their job. They need to speak to the majority leader. We understand the majority leader who wants to protect

the State of Nevada. So I'm not trying to lift mountains that I can't personally lift. But what I can do is start making the clarion call to Senators around this country who have high-level nuclear waste in their States when we have already spent \$12.5 billion for a single repository, and as I've said numerous times, underneath a mountain in a desert.

The numbers here in Washington—on the House side, we have an overwhelming majority. In the other body, their majority is not as big as it once was. And because of that, these centers are even empowered more to be able to go to their leader and plead for their State and make the compelling argument.

Again, if you can't make it for Hanford, you can't make it for anywhere.

I'm from southern Illinois. I don't have a nuclear facility in my congressional district, although I am from the State of Illinois, and Illinois is a huge nuclear power State. We have six locations, 11 reactors. So we have high-level nuclear waste stored 40 miles from downtown Chicago.

Now, does that make sense? Does that make sense in a day when we've already spent \$12 billion to prepare, locate, research a single repository that can be kept safe, secure, and stored? It doesn't make sense.

So that's why in the coming weeks you'll see other posters like this. I'll definitely keep this one. But we'll compare Yucca Mountain to downtown Chicago. We'll compare Yucca Mountain to Boston, Massachusetts. We'll compare Yucca Mountain to Savannah, Georgia.

If you live in a State and may not have a nuclear power plant, you may very well have the legacy of World War II Manhattan-type projects and nuclear waste that has to be stored elsewhere than in the place where it is today.

As the chairman of the Environment and the Economy Subcommittee, my congressional responsibility is that of nuclear waste. It is a challenge for this country. It is a challenge that we already have a plan to deal with. In fact, ratepayers of States that have nuclear power have been paying an additional charge on their utility bills to prepare Yucca Mountain to receive this waste.

To have one man and a President who's complicit in his design to stop this is not in the best interest of this country, and I will continue to come down to the well to fight this fight so that we take full advantage of the great resources we have and follow up on the planning and the funding that we've done for decades to have a single repository.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1340

THE PRESIDENT'S JOBS BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 45 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, we're going into recess for a week. We passed a bill to keep the government running. Some of us were concerned that we were compromising with ourselves, but supposedly it was a bill that, though we compromised with ourselves, that the Senate could pass. Now we find out they've tabled the bill, and now they're talking shutdown.

It's extremely disconcerting when it seems that one group believes that the best way to win politically is to have a shutdown and blame Republicans. It's also disconcerting to have a President come into this body here, speak to the House and Senate, stand here at the historic podium and lecture this body on the President's jobs bill that didn't exist while he was lecturing us.

It was entirely consistent, though, with exactly 2 years before that when the President's polling data showed that people didn't think that the President's ideas for health care were good, and since he is such an incredibly gifted reader of speeches, apparently he felt if he came back to the House floor and were able to use the teleprompters and read to the body that he would be able to convince everyone to go along with the government takeover of health care completely. And that day, he kept representing things about "his bill," "this bill," "my bill," "my plan," "this plan," and there was no plan. There was no bill at that time either.

So it was not terribly surprising that the President would come in here again 2 years later when polls are not looking good and tell us that we had to pass a bill that didn't exist and that he had a plan but the plan didn't really exist.

Eventually, we got a copy of his bill, even though for 6 days nobody filed an American Jobs Act. So I went to the trouble of filing one. I felt if the President wanted to fuss at us for not passing the American Jobs Act, there ought to be one. So mine was two pages. His is 155.

But it's amazing, and especially with all the stuff going on with Solyndra in California and the scandal that that has become, that this administration twisted and pushed and potentially distorted things in order to get half a billion dollars to a company which wasn't doing well, and then turn around and turn the agreement upside down.

Secured creditors, those that provide the money, are supposed to be paid first in the event that there's not enough to go around for everyone. And yet somebody in this administration—maybe a number of somebodies it appears right now—changed the deal so that the secured creditors, the American taxpayer, the government, would not get paid back first.

My days as a district judge in Texas and chief justice would seem to indicate that that kind of thing is fraud